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Low Attendance at Deliberative, Attendees Call for its Replacement

MATT RITTENHOUSE
Tri-Town Times

CHESTER – In just about an hour, the Chester School District's deliberative session was over, with little discussion about the budget or other warrant articles. When the meeting started at 7 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 8, aside from town and district officials and Chester Academy administration, just 16 residents were in the gym of chairs set up for the night. About 10 more residents showed up as the meeting began.

Chester has 3,019 registered voters.

In total, approximately 45 voters - not quite 1.5 percent of those eligible - showed up for the meeting,

where just one article went to a vote - to remove a budget committee recommendation from article 5, where it had been mistakenly included - and all the articles were sent to the warrant and secret ballot vote, to be held March 13.

Nearly all of the meeting was comprised of explanation of the eight warrant articles by school board chair Royal Richardson and members of the budget committee.

Ending the night was article 8, a call for rescinding SB 2 or Senate Bill 2, the system that in 2008 broke up traditional town meeting into two sections, deliberative and a secret ballot vote. Detractors of SB 2 pointed to the extremely low partic-

ipation at that night's deliberative session as proof that the system was not working for Chester.

Acting as a resident, chair of the budget committee Rhonda Lamphere brought the petition forward this year. Both the committee and school board back the petition to get rid of SB 2. Lamphere took time at the deliberative session to plead her case and urge support for the article.

While she noted the pros of the system in others' perspectives, those benefits weren't being seen in Chester, she said. She argued that while seemingly more democratic because of the potential for more participation in the secret ballot

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School Budget Gets Solid Support at Deliberative Session

PENNY WILLIAMS
Tri-Town Times

HAMPSTEAD – The Hampstead School Deliberative Session looked more like an old-fashioned Town Meeting, as 235 voters jammed the Hampstead Middle School cafeteria. That crowd came out Tuesday evening, Feb. 7, to address a threat to cut \$1 million from the proposed \$23,452,315 budget, and squashed the attempt by an overwhelming vote of 207 to 25 in secret ballot voting.

The proposed Article 2 amendment, to cut \$1 million from the budget was proposed by Dave Murphy, who gave the reasons his son, Budget Committee member Matt Murphy, has been expressing for many months.

Dave Murphy told the crowd that cutting \$1 mil-

lion from the budget would not impact any school operations because it was only removing the built-in cushion the school board and administration put into the budget. He said the result of removing this cushion would make future school boards and administrations look more carefully at line items.

He compared the cost of a Pinkerton Academy student (roughly \$10,000) to that of a Hampstead student (\$20,000), saying the cost to educate a Hampstead student is double that of Pinkerton and is too much. Hampstead students are tuitioned to Pinkerton for high school.

"This would not really reduce the budget," he said of the proposed cut. "The school gives back a million to the town in surplus anyway. This is just a shot

across the bow and it is not biting into muscle, this is just into pure fat."

Several residents spoke against the proposed amendment. Gina Mullane said the Pinkerton-Hampstead cost comparison was comparing apples to oranges. The School Board noted that several cost factors that are in the Hampstead budget were not in the Pinkerton numbers, such as transportation and many special education costs.

Resident Jason Cipriano said that while he applauded the intention of the amendment, "good intentions don't educate our children." He said what is needed are specific, targeted cuts, not cutting across the board, and added that the financial situation should not be solved on the backs of the town's youngest resi-

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MEASURING SUCCESS Brian Folsom of Folsom's Sugar House in Chester gears up for another season of making maple syrup in his sugar shack on Candia Road Friday night. The season has started early this year, and Folsom hopes for rolling high and low temperatures to boost the sap's sugar content. He is shown measuring the content as he boils down the sap into syrup. See story on page 8.

Photo by Chris Paul

Sandown Selectmen Choose Bulk Electricity Purchasing

MATT RITTENHOUSE
Tri-Town Times

SANDOWN – The board of selectmen could save the town a few thousand dollars this year, thanks to a bulk electricity purchasing agreement with White Columns Office Solutions. After discussions over the course of three meetings, the board agreed Monday night to sign a contract the follow-

ing day and lock in a one-year rate.

Along with former selectman Roger Barczak, White Columns' Tad Dziemian met with the board to explain the agreement at a previous meeting. The town will be able to lock in the lower rate by sidestepping current energy provider Public Service Co. of New Hampshire (PSNH) and going to a third party supplier,

in this case, NextEra Energy, a company in Texas. NextEra owns the nuclear plant at Seabrook.

Though the final price of the electricity won't be set until the contract is signed, owing to rapidly fluctuating energy prices, Dziemian estimated it should be under 7 cents per Kilowatt hour (kW). This compares to the 8.39 cents **continued on page 10**

Town Deliberative Session Focuses on Police Station

PENNY WILLIAMS
Tri-Town Times

HAMPSTEAD - A modest crowd of about 71 registered voters turned out for the Town Deliberative Session, and what discussion there was centered on the proposed new police station, which received overwhelming support.

Article 6 asked voters to support a bond for \$1,538,300 to build a new police station. Jim Stewart, chairman of the Police Building Committee, introduced the proposal and committee member Steve Londrigan presented a PowerPoint highlighting the process and results of the months of work put in by the committee. The presentation explained how the building has been made smaller, more efficient and

for less of a cost than its previous three attempts, which had been approved by a majority of the voters but failed to reach the three-fifths supermajority required by a bond article.

Londrigan said this year's 7,600-square-foot building is as small as is functionally practical. It would be placed on town-owned land.

Support for the proposed station came in a steady stream after resident Michael Holland complained that the 10 or 11 police officers present were "intimidating," and asked that if they were not residents, they be asked to leave. Moderator Neil Reardon said he didn't agree that they should be asked to leave because they had an obvious interest in the article and had a right to be

there, although they couldn't vote or speak. Holland said he disagreed because the officers could potentially use "selective enforcement."

All three selectmen supported the proposed police station article, even though Selectman Chairman Sean Murphy had originally voted against it when the board decided its recommendations on warrant articles. Murphy said at the Friday evening Deliberative that he did not have answers to his questions about the building when he voted against the proposal but had since received satisfactory answers and now fully supported it.

Residents Natalie Gallo, Bruce Randall and Randy Clark all spoke in support of the building, saying it is long overdue and the present station is inadequate

and unsafe. Judi Crowley said all other public buildings in town that have needed updating have had that work done.

Budget Committee member Matt Murphy questioned the bond interest amounts and asked whether they were included in the \$1,538,300 figure, which they are not. He then asked if an article could be submitted asking the voters to raise and appropriate the \$1,538,300 to build the station and was told an article couldn't be added at this time.

The article was moved to the warrant as presented.

Article 9, asking voters to raise \$54,000 to pay the professionals the Police Building Committee retained for the plans, so that if the station were not approved this year, the plans would nevertheless be own-

ed by the town, was moved to the warrant without debate.

Also moved to the warrant without debate was Article 7, the Town budget of \$5,175,175. The budget is 1.66 percent less than the current year's budget.

The two Fire Department articles were moved to the warrant without debate. Article 8 seeks voter approval to use the Fire Department's Capital Reserve Fund to pay the town's 5 percent co-payment, \$13,750, if the Department gets a Homeland Security grant of \$261,250 for a new tanker. Article 10 asked to approve using the Capital Reserve Fund to replace outdated communications and emergency health care equipment in the amount of \$64,000. Neither article has any tax impact.

Article 11 asked voters to appropriate \$50,000 to complete the erosion and drainage project at the Town Beach area. Stewart said that by law, more sand can't be dumped on the Town Beach, and the run-off from the surrounding streets is washing away the beach. He said if the project isn't finished, there will be no beach. There was no further discussion and the article was moved to the warrant.

Also eliciting no discussion were Article 12, the Library's request to add \$10,000 to its Capital Reserve Fund for roof replacement, and Article 13, which would allow the Conservation Commission to use Town Forest maintenance money for forest management, with no tax impact.

Chester

continued from page 1

vote, that was overshadowed by a disinterested voting public that ends up not as informed on the issues as it could be with the traditional meeting, where arguments are raised and weighed and a vote taken

right then and there on the article.

Lamphere said attendance is low at deliberative session, debate quality is thus poor, and with SB2, ballot voters lose control over the budget that they have during the traditional meeting. She added that the cost for the extra session

runs about \$10,000 a year.

No one spoke in favor of SB 2, but others involved in town operations also called for its dismissal.

School board member Mike Romick said that while he applauded those voters who attended deliberative, the intent of the system as promoted, to increase participation, was evidently not successful.

Former selectman and current State Representative Gene Charron said SB2 can attract "no, no" voters, who, uninformed of the need for a particular cost, will simply vote down everything on the warrant. He called for a return to the traditional meeting days of debate,

knitting and bake sales.

"Let's get back to tradition. Let's get back to talking to each other," said Charron. "These meetings can be exciting (because of the arguments and debate). It shouldn't be this quiet in here."

Selectman Jack Cannon had a similar call. "The power of Chester is the power of us to come together to make decisions for the betterment of our community," he said.

Article 3, the operating budget, received just a single question and went to the ballot unchanged at \$11,866,824. The default budget stands at \$11,834,102.

Article 1 is general acceptance of reports and article 2 is to elect officers.

The operating budget shows a decrease in operating expenses of .83 percent. Though at first look it seems to be up by \$144,824, the discrepancy is caused by a new accounting practice

where instead of removing grant revenues from budget lines, as had been done in the past, those sums have stayed in the lines and are only accounted for on the revenue side.

Also a savings to the taxpayer is article 4, the collective bargaining agreement between the school board and the Chester Education Association (CEA), the teachers' union. The article, if passed, represents a savings in the first year of \$28,283 in salary compensation over current year spending, and \$97,023 in health care savings. Because the CEA gave up control of its health care plan to allow the district to shop around, if the contract is approved, another \$19,322 in savings over current year spending will be realized in administration health care costs. Those savings are expected to carry over the life of the three-year contract.

In its first year the con-

tract represents a reduction of 26.5 cents per thousand dollars of home assessment.

Both the budget committee and school board urged voter support of both the budget and the contract.

Other articles are as follows: Article 5 would call a special meeting should article 4 fail. Article 6 seeks to set up a Tuition Capital Reserve Fund with up to \$30,000 of surplus to fund unexpected Pinkerton Academy tuitions. Currently the budget includes about that much to cover potential students. The fund would stop taxpayers' need to annually raise that money. Article 7 seeks to place up to \$25,000 of surplus into the School Buildings Maintenance Fund to cover unforeseen building maintenance issues.

Secret ballot vote is set for March 13. Polls will be open from 7 a.m. until 8 p.m. at the multipurpose room.

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Road Agent, Selectmen Debate Packaging of Proposed Road Bond

MATT RITTENHOUSE
Tri-Town Times

CHESTER – Road Agent Mike Oleson wants to put forward a \$6 million bond for roadwork at Town Meeting, but discussions with the selectmen indicated that another road bond for \$2 million might also be floated.

The board met with Oleson at its Thursday, Feb. 9, meeting to get ready to sell the plan to voters with a unified front. But while selectmen gave suggestions for the road agent to change his plan and process, he wasn't having any of it. Oleson said he had gone through the process prescribed by selectmen and the budget committee for numerous years and had no success getting projects past voters, in part, he said, because the board of selectmen and budget committee didn't always back him.

Oleson outlined this year's proposed project, indicating type of roadwork, mileage and other factors. He didn't specify costs for each road, something that had selectmen questioning how it would be received by voters. Oleson said he wasn't going to get bids now because contractors were tired of spending their time and money to bid projects that never come to fruition.

Though selectman Mike Weider asked about costs before Oleson was finished talking, the road agent continued his presentation.

"What's the cost?" Weider asked.

"I don't know. What's asphalt going to cost next year? We'll put the money in the bank and then go from there," said Oleson.

Weider began to argue about how, during Town Meeting, discussion about

how to fix East Derry Road was problematic but Oleson went on. "Can I continue?" said Oleson later. "I'm going to continue."

Oleson's plan is to specify the roads he intends to work on and to complete an entire road before moving on to the next. He wants to move the town toward a road infrastructure that only needs regular repaving, not major, expensive rehabilitation.

The roads to be looked at this year are much the same that Oleson has been arguing to repair during past town meetings.

He's looking to reclaim Jennifer, Holman, Parker, Rand, Great Oak and 4/10 of a mile of the better part of East Derry Road, with 4.2 miles in this portion of the project. A shim and overlay are planned for Pheasant Run, Meadow Fox, Partridge, Quail Hill, Eagle's

Crest, Shepard Home, Hanson and the portion of Fremont from Hale True to the Fremont line. This part totals 6.1 miles of roadway. A full rebuild is planned for the other 6/10 of a mile of East Derry and 1.9 miles of Harantis Lake Road.

Oleson said there were too many unknowns to nail down costs per road without engineering, and once the money was in the bank, he'd get the engineering done and go from there.

Though chair Steph Landau suggested separating engineering costs into a separate warrant article, Oleson was dubious. He argued that if the bond failed, it could leave the town in the potential predicament of having engineering for projects that may never get approved. He pointed to outdated engineering he'd done on East Derry Road five years ago.

Landau was confident that the work would get done in later years if only the engineering passed.

Selectmen also questioned how to finish roads that were never completed under the last road bond, overseen by former road agent Rob Brown, before they deteriorated further. Those roads include Lane, Fremont, Wells Village, Tenny Farm, Hanson and Shepard Home. Harantis Lake was never started as part of that bond.

Oleson estimated the cost to complete those roads - minus Hanson and Shepard Home, which he included in his other plan - at \$2 million.

Oleson and highway worker Andy Higham pointed to problems on those relatively recently worked on roads, including severe drainage issues on Lane. They said Hanson has

just a half inch of asphalt in some areas.

Weider was concerned that with a lack of hard numbers, it would be a tough sell to the budget committee and public. He said he wanted to be able to explain the projects to voters in detail.

"I'm tired of it. If the town doesn't trust me, they need to find someone else to do this work," said Oleson.

Selectman Jack Cannon, liaison to the highway department, said he favored a concerted push for roadwork this year because there weren't other major costs on the warrant, and it was a good time to borrow money and get inexpensive labor.

No decision was reached on how the roadwork will be packaged this year, Oleson giving that decision to the board and noting that they knew what he wanted to do.

Short Night for Planning Board

PENNY WILLIAMS
Tri-Town Times

HAMPSTEAD – The Planning Board gave its approval to a request by Roy Charland for a site plan to allow construction of a single story garage/warehouse on the rear portion of a parcel at 130 Route 111.

At its meeting last week, Charland said he had Zoning Board of Adjustment approval for construction of the building, and he was bringing in the site plan to add the new building.

In other business at the Feb. 6 meeting, the board removed from its agenda a request by Paul Maida of

116 Eagle Road for consideration of a subdivision lot line change.

Maida had gone through an extensive Planning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustment discussion beginning in November 2005 over this property, when Code Enforcement and Building Inspector Kris Emerson discovered Maida was reconstructing the dwelling at 116 Eagle Road without a permit, and further investigation led to other issues.

Maida bought the property from Howard Chandler, and it turned out there were two dwellings on the single dwelling lot. He received a Cease and Desist order on

the house reconstruction and was ordered to return the second dwelling to its original state as a garage.

Those changes were approved in November of 2006, and Maida then applied for approval for a plan for a larger dwelling, which was initially denied. After changes were made, that plan was approved in November of 2010.

However, when Maida's latest request was checked into, it was discovered that he had not completed all that had been required, and the request was removed from the February agenda. It is expected to be back before the Planning Board in March.

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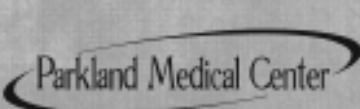
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Editorial

Straying Off Course

When we elect our state representatives and state senator, we hopefully have chosen public servants who are willing to listen to their constituents and are eager to help them through the occasional labyrinth of state regulations.

But we don't think that means – especially in the Live Free or Die state – that the way to solve a distinctly local issue is to create a new state law.

A Derry legislator has introduced a bill that removes the tax exemption from Pinkerton Academy and requires the school to be assessed property taxes on the market value of its property. The law is geared specifically to Pinkerton Academy and to Derry. Other entities with similar situations – hospitals, for example, which couldn't exist without serving people from towns other than where they are based, or parochial schools whose student body consists of more than 25 percent out-of-towners – would not be impacted. Yet.

Asking the state to impose a speed limit on Royal Lane in Londonderry – a town road – is another example. Do we really want a roster of town roads with state-imposed speed limits throughout New Hampshire?

And what of the myriad bills seeking to change the way town Conservation Commissions do business? Attempts to change Conservation fund-

ing and activity have failed at the local level in various towns; now the state is being asked to alter statute to help unhappy local officials get their way.

We understand the reason for some purely local matters reaching the legislative level. One such example is the naming of a bridge in memory of two Londonderry servicemen who lost their lives. That bill honors the military and recognizes the men's sacrifice, something everyone in the state can understand. And that's a lot different than trying to solve a local problem by kicking it up to the state level when the local response is not to the individual legislator's liking.

New Hampshire prides itself on having a government accessible to all residents, with mechanisms readily available for residents to solve problems at the local level. Have a problem with a selectman or town councilor? There's no state ethics code or mechanism for recall, both of which exist in other states. Towns are expected to handle their own issues.

But recently, our legislators seem more and more to represent their own beliefs and interests when they get to Concord. And as more state laws are passed that regulate what previously was the purview of municipalities, New Hampshire is losing its Live Free or Die identity. Is that what we elected our legislators to do?

Letters

Pig in a Poke?

To the editor,

It was truly disheartening and embarrassing listening to Jim Stewart try to sell the new Hampstead Police Station at last Friday's Deliberative Session. He sounded like a used car salesman trying to convince the customer to fork over the money but refusing to provide the Car Facts.

After about a 15-minute presentation, we had learned that the project was based on a "consensus model" plus the participants' backgrounds; how hard they had worked; how often they met; the bond amount; and the tax increase required for amortizing the bond over ten years.

Jim said little about the new design - which the public had not seen - other than to state that it was adequate, affordable and would satisfy Hampstead's future needs.

Very strange: wasn't it a building he was trying to sell?

After prodding from the audience, the new floor plan was brought up front from the rear of the room. The architect gave a cursory overview of the layout. Surprisingly, he could not answer elementary, specific questions, such as how many lockers in the men's locker room, the size of the conference room, etc. He ended the discussion by demurring that those details "have to be worked out."

Thus, as we prepare to vote, there are no specifics as to what will be built or a guaranteed-not-to-exceed firm bid, as in past proposals. Instead, we are being

asked to approve a not-to-exceed \$1.5 million bond, based on Jim Stewart's assurance that a couple of contractors agree that the bond amount is "sufficient."

Which begs the question: how can those contractors and Jim be so sure if the architect has not begun the detailed design of the project?

And then, there is the \$54,000 article for professional fees. If the bond fails and this article passes, Jim told us, we'll be locked into that design forever and will vote over and over again until it passes. Really?

A new Hampstead Police Station is long overdue. But this proposal is a pig in a poke.

The only positive about this "proposal" is that it is new construction: anything is better than what exists now. But Hampstead police might find itself in the same predicament as the East Kingston Police Chief, who apologized beforehand to the visiting committee about the shortcomings of his newly built station.

Thus, the choice is clear. Vote Yes and fork over \$1.5 million for "something," hoping for the best. Or keep your head and join me voting No on the bond and professional fees.

Our officers - and Hampstead - deserve better.
Jorge Mesa-Tejada
Hampstead

Yes on Hampstead School Article 7

To the editor:

The first deliberative session for the Hampstead School Warrant is done.

The turnout was wonderful by SB2 standards. The School Board and the Superintendent's Office were eloquent and prepared. Those in attendance, overwhelmingly biased in support of the School, were ready to make their feelings known.

I use the word biased because those of us who support fiscal responsibility were outnumbered 10 to 1.

Arguments for and against were convincing. And even though the moderator asked for civility from the crowd, they chose to applaud and jeer at will.

I choose to support the current budget offering because the alternative is to defer to the more expensive default budget. I also support the 2 percent tax cap, Article 7, on the School Warrant.

Two things occurred during the session that strengthen my commitment to these causes. The first was the toilet paper reference from a citizen that speaks volumes to those of us in support of reform. The second was Superintendent LaSalle's personal, almost patriotic, explanation that a tax cap reduces the "value" of his vote to a mathematical equation. What wasn't said was the fact that his "vote" is the one that determines how much of your money he needs to run the schools.

The tax cap is flexible. It can be changed whenever the need exists. The only thing we are asking is there be some accountability in the budget process. You have the power to make that happen.

Vote Yes on Article 7 on the School Warrant.

Bob O'Brien
Hampstead

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More Funding Needed for Paul Revere Jr. Bell Project

PENNY WILLIAMS
Tri-Town Times

HAMPSTEAD – Marion Donahue of Pentucket Bank visited the Historic District Heritage Commission to gather information about the Paul Revere Jr. bell restoration project, with a view to the bank's possibly making a donation to the effort.

Commission co-chairman Rob Morris explained that the bell cannot be rung, only tolled, because of structure problems with the yoke from which it hangs. He reviewed the work Dave

Dupouy has been doing on the project, and said the next step is to take down the bell so the yoke can be removed and Dupouy can copy it. After he makes the new yoke and hangs it in the belfry, the bell will be rehung, and hopefully then it can be rung. However, as the bell weighs 1200 pounds, the procedure will require professional assistance.

Morris said the Hampstead Historical Society has used some of its funds that were donated for the bell project, and some Town funds have also been used

for the project. However, what remains to be done will take more funding than is readily available, he said, adding that a grant is being sought.

In other business at its Feb. 8 meeting:

- The committee discussed the Boston Post Cane, a replica of which is awarded to the oldest town resident who meets the town's criteria. Member Priscilla Lindquist said the original cane is kept at the Hampstead Historical Museum, and said a replica of the Boston Post Cane has been returned to the town,

following the latest recipient's death. Both replicas will be kept in the Town Office until the next recipient is determined.

The Boston Post Cane tradition originated in the early 1900s when the first canes were created by the Boston Post newspaper. The canes were sent to 431 towns in New England to be given to the oldest male resident. In 1930, women became eligible to receive the Boston Post Canes, which were owned by the towns.

Lindquist said the commission has received two

nominations for the oldest resident, and will continue to accept nominations until March 1. The Selectmen will award the cane to the oldest town resident meeting the criteria.

Residents of Hampstead who have lived in town for at least 15 continuous years are eligible.

- Lindquist also informed the commission that she has learned grants and funds are available through the New Hampshire Conservation License Plate program for historical preservation projects. She will see if she can find someone to

prepare a grant application for the bell project, once a firm cost is determined.

- The commission also reviewed a demolition permit submitted by Building Inspector Kris Emerson for a dwelling at 126 Wash Pond Road owned by Jim Wilkinson. He plans to tear it down and rebuild. The house slated for demolition was built around 1947, Chairman Maury Randall said.

The commission voted to allow the demolition to continue, and Lindquist will notify Emerson.

Unanticipated Revenue May Come By Way of Pole Tax

MATT RITTENHOUSE
Tri-Town Times

CHESTER – The town will be sending property tax bills to telecommunications utilities for the first time this year, and the bills, to go out soon for FairPoint Communications and Granite State Communications, total nearly \$45,000.

The selectmen decided to send the bills during their Feb. 9 meeting on the strength of a decision made in 2010 by the state legislature, which ended the tax exemption for telecommunications poles and conduits. It's a decision that Granite State Communications, the major player in town, opposes, and one it says will bring additional costs to its customers.

The history of whether telecommunications poles must pay property tax, whether the poles were real estate or personal property, and other related debates is a long one, but for years those companies have been exempt from paying property taxes on utility poles. But as of 2011, local

municipalities can decide whether to tax the poles.

The town's assessor recently calculated the value of those assets. FairPoint has about \$200,000 in poles, leaving it with a supplemental tax bill this year of \$4,932, and Granite State has \$1,620,900, resulting in \$39,971 in costs to the town.

Scott Marsh, with town assessor Municipal Resources, Inc., brought the issue to the selectmen. Marsh assumed the utilities would be seeking abatements, but suspected the majority of those bills would come into the town's coffers.

Bill Stafford, Chief Operating Officer of Granite State Communications, said telecommunications companies have never had to pay local property tax, and characterized the pole tax as "patently unfair."

Though Stafford understood why municipalities would choose to levy the tax, Granite State is estimating the potential new tax impact across its service area at \$136,000 a year, a 108 percent increase over last year.

In 1990 the Communi-

cations Services Tax (CST) was instituted. It's now a 7 percent tax on all two-way communications services. The CST is paid by the consumer, not the utility.

The CST, Stafford said, returned the parity between wire and wireless services, but said the pole tax will disrupt that. Prior to the CST, telephone companies paid a personal property tax on poles and conduits.

That extra cost will be passed almost directly on to the consumers by Granite State if the exemption isn't replaced. It's the only way to recover those costs, said Stafford, who added that some of the costs would be absorbed by the business, but such an effort would take away from efforts at deploying better services for consumers.

FairPoint, the largest telecommunications company in the state, has

already petitioned the state Public Utilities Commission (PUC) to allow a surcharge specifically to cover the tax. Granite State will be petitioning the PUC for a similar surcharge as well if the exemption is not returned.

Coloring the current debate is House Bill 1305, to be reviewed this week. Last week it easily passed the Science, Technology and Energy Committee. The bill is supported by Granite State and FairPoint because it seeks to reestablish the exemption, as well as set up a committee to investigate how utilities are taxed.

According to the New Hampshire Municipal Association, which opposed the exemption and called it unconstitutional, efforts at calling the tax "new" are specious. It says all property owners pay property tax, including pole co-owners,

the electrical utilities.

"All of the arguments for reviving the exemption are based on a desire to accommodate the telecommunications industry and its customers," states a Municipal Association fact sheet. "Even if all of the cost is borne by landline customers, it is unclear why there would be anything wrong with that. Property taxes are, for every other industry, a cost of doing business. Those costs are borne by customers. That is how business works. When one industry is exempt from property taxes, that burden is shifted to other taxpayers (including other businesses). It makes no sense to require taxpayers to bear one industry's costs

of doing business."

The Municipal Association also said it is dubious to say the lack of a pole tax creates a parity between wire and wireless phone companies, as wireless companies pay taxes on their towers.

The other argument going back and forth over the exemption is whether the tax is "bad for business." While telecommunications companies say that it's sending the wrong message and affects jobs and economic development, others say the exemption is only bad for the business that no longer receives a benefit.

Whatever the outcome of the debate, Chester's bills were set to be processed on Friday.

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Selectmen OK Grant Agreement for Emergency Center Generator

PENNY WILLIAMS
Tri-Town Times

HAMPSTEAD – The Board of Selectmen approved an agreement with Homeland Security for a grant to purchase a generator for the Town Office Building and accepted Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) grants reimbursing the town for October storm damage.

The Emergency Management Performance Grant

would be a matching grant for \$13,875, and the town would have to find its share of the \$25,000 cost of the generator at at Town Hall, enabling that building to be Hampstead's official Emergency Operations Center. The approval of the agreement and the meeting minutes now go to the Executive Council, where final approval of the grant is requested.

The new Emergency Management Plan for the town designates Town Hall

as the official Emergency Operations Center (EOC), although it has been located at the fire station. Town Hall, currently without a generator, can't operate during a power outage, and the EOC will likely remain at the fire station until the Town has a generator in place. The selectmen all agree that the generator is necessary to keep computers running and communications viable in an emergency and that the Town Hall is the appropriate loca-

tion for the EOC.

In other business at Monday night's meeting:

- Chief of Police Joe Beaudoin announced an Open House at the Police Station on Saturday, March 3, from noon to 3 p.m. He said the Rockingham County Sheriff's Mobile Command Post vehicle, the Rockingham County Special Operations Force Bear Cat armored personnel carrier and the Hampstead Fire Department Quint would be on site. The station will be open for tours and free hamburgers and hot dogs, donated by J&B Butcher, will be served, along with pizza donated by Toss and Sauce.

- Town Treasurer Harold

Williams presented the new Fund Balance Policy required by the state. The board will review it and decide at the next meeting what level of fund balance the town will maintain. This year's goal was to get the new policy written and in place.

- Municipal Resources, Inc., Assessor Joe Lessard, the town's assessor, reported that a tax bill of \$38,364 is to be forwarded to Fairpoint Communications as a result of the 2011 legislative decision that no longer exempts its poles and conduits from property tax assessment. Fairpoint's Hampstead assessed value was \$1,721,900, resulting in the tax bill of \$38,364.

Lessard said legislation currently being considered may return Fairpoint and other telephone communication property to exempt status so the 2012 assessment isn't a sure thing, but Fairpoint will get the bill for 2011.

- The board received a recommendation from the Recycling and Solid Waste Committee to reduce by half the number of trash bags or barrels that can be put out for pick-up (see related story page 11). Selectman Rick Hartung was opposed to cutting the number in half, saying that would be too much of a shock, and suggested a less steep reduction. The community was asked for input.

Cable Committee Critiques Broadcast of School Deliberative

PENNY WILLIAMS
Tri-Town Times

HAMPSTEAD – After reviewing the live broadcast of the Hampstead School District Deliberative Session, which emanated from the school's cable studio over Channel 6, the Cable TV Advisory Committee said the new audio system worked well. But committee chairman Clay Shaw said he thinks the video needs improvement, and he will be working with Comcast on that.

The audio system was donated to the school's studio by the Cable Committee.

However, a glitch occurred in the broadcasting of the Tuesday, Feb. 7, Deliberative when people thought

the microphones were off when they were still on, so conversations that were not intended for broadcast were aired.

The committee has always had a policy that it does not edit live broadcasts for replays, and decided not to make a change in spite of what happened at the Deliberative Session.

To avoid future problems of this nature, the committee decided that when there is a pause in the action, such as for secret ballot voting, the audio will be lowered but the video feed will continue. Shaw also said he thought the crew working at the School Deliberative was too small, and sufficient people should be present to handle all eventualities.

In other business:

- State Rep. Regina Birdsell, R-Hampstead asked to be appointed to the Cable Committee, and received the committee's recommendation. The Board of Selectmen appointed her to the committee Monday night.

- Candidate's Night, Tuesday, March 6, will be televised and Natalie Gallo, committee member and organizer of the event with Dawn Shaw, said letters of invitation would be going out soon. Vivian Clark has agreed to moderate the event, and members of the audience will be able to ask questions. Those watching from home can call in their questions at 329-4100, ext. 100, or drop them off at Town Hall prior to the event.

Local 4-H'ers Honored

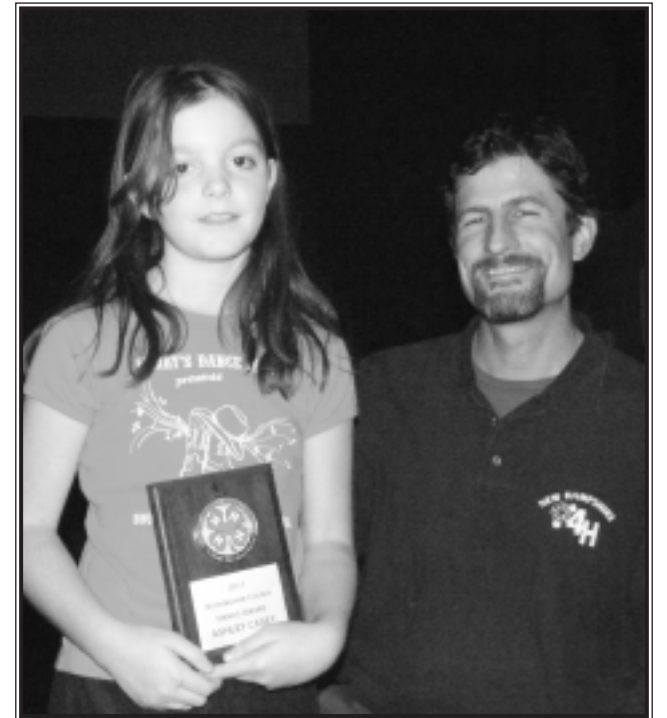
The contributions and accomplishments of Rockingham County's 500-plus 4-H youth members and adult volunteers were recognized at the annual 4-H Youth Development Recognition Night.

The event took place at Raymond High School and featured a potluck dinner, with music and images of a commemorative 2011 4-H slide show created by volunteer leader Suzette St. Pierre of Lee.

Also celebrated were the activities of the more than 25 clubs and programs in the county. Masters of Ceremony were 4-H teen leaders Elizabeth Caverly of East Hampstead and Daniel Turner of Derry.

Special awards recipients included: Elizabeth Caverly of Hampstead, Junior 4-H'er of the Year, and Ashley Casey of the Chester Farm and Garden Club, 4-H Hands Award

For more information about the University of New



Ashley Casey, 9, of the Chester Farm and Garden 4-H Club was recently presented with the 2011 4-H "Hands" Award for her can-do and will-do spirit. With Casey is Michael Young, 4-H Youth Development Educator, UNH Cooperative Extension. *Courtesy photo*

Hampshire Cooperative Extension's 4-H Youth Development Program, contact the 4-H office in Rockingham County at 679-5616 or visit: bit.ly/RockCty4H.

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Hampstead Eagle Scout Bridge Project Completed

PENNY WILLIAMS
Tri-Town Times

HAMPSTEAD — Billy Conte of Boy Scout Troop 33 spent a lot of time on his Eagle Scout project, but the Hampstead Conservation lands now have a new, safe and secure bridge.

Conte brought his project to a close in December and has submitted the paperwork for his Eagle Scout Court. He and his fellow scouts and scout leadership built a bridge for the Hampstead Conservation trails. Conservation Com-

mission Chairman Tim Lovell said the bridge is the standard for all future bridges built on the trails.

The bridge is located off the trailhead at the end of Cambridge Road. It is approximately a quarter of mile in from the trailhead. Conte said he had to carry all the material and tools for the bridge construction by hand.

"The bridge is 20 feet long and it took 187 man hours to build," Conte said. "The bridge was completed on time and under budget."

Conte and his scout friends and leaders recycled the old bridge that the new one replaces by placing it in a wetlands crossing for people who use the conservation trails. The Eagle Scout project addressed two issues: the need for a more solid and secure bridge, which Conte constructed, and a crossing for trail users at a wetlands area.

"I would like to thank the members of Troop 33, my leaders, my friends and family for all their support and help," Conte said.



Pictured is the new bridge that Billy Conte of Boy Scout Troop 33 constructed for the Hampstead Conservation lands for his Eagle Scout project. He is standing on one end of the bridge.
Photo by Penny Williams

School

continued from page 1

dents. "I object to our children suffering to find a solution," he said.

Murphy objected strenuously to School Board member Greg Hoppa's comment that suggested a cut of \$1 million could result in a 36 to 1 ratio of students to teachers, calling this scare tactics and unfair.

District Superintendent Richard LaSalle said there are three areas where a \$1 million cut could be addressed: services, such as transporting Hampstead students to Pinkerton in Derry; non-mandated programs such as languages; and personnel reductions. He said the cut would be a balanced combination within these areas, with a view to causing the least impact on programs and the quality of education.

Matt Murphy said, "We are just asking that you live without the surplus for a year." He said the school budget has grown 90 per-

cent in the last 10 years and he blamed that for lower home sales.

School Board member Vivian Clark explained that the surplus is used to offset the following year's appropriation, and if no surplus were returned to the town, next year's taxes would rise. She and administrators sought to explain that the surplus isn't a line item and comes from a variety of sources over the course of a year, varying from year to year.

"The School Board would never just fire a bunch of teachers to account for the million dollar reduction," she said.

Selectman Chairman Sean Murphy accused the School Board and administration of not wanting to take a hard look at the budget to find reductions.

"The board didn't dig

deep enough and if you don't want to do it, the people are going to try to do it," he said.

The debate ended with several more residents stating that they didn't want to see a million dollar cut come out of their children's education and calling for the budget to stand as presented. The vote underscored that this was the overall sentiment, and the budget article was moved to the warrant unchanged.

The only other serious debate occurred over Article 7, which asked voters whether or not to implement a tax cap that would limit budget increases in the amount to be raised by local taxes (appropriation) to not more than 2 percent of the prior fiscal year's actual amount of local taxes raised.

Jorge Mesa-Tejada submitted this petition article

and had a PowerPoint presentation explaining why he proposed it.

"We have to control costs," he said, noting his proposal would be one way in which this could be done. "Budgets have grown out of proportion to enrollments, and the School Board is no longer representative of the taxpayers. The administration, not the School Board, prepares the budget. The tax cap affects appropriations by limiting their year-to-year growth. Because we approve the budget, we can control how many tax dollars are available per year; that's why a tax cap is on the warrant."

Mesa-Tejada said the School Board and administration have worked to con-

trol spending but he added that when the economy recovers, that course might not continue.

"The tax cap will control budget growth over time, provide sufficient funds to offset loss of income plus reasonable annual increases, instill fiscal discipline in the District, and protect taxpayers from fiscal surprises," he said.

Several board members, administrators and residents spoke in opposition to the article, saying it would hamper the district from addressing revenue shortfalls or emergencies and might encourage spending. The article was moved to the warrant as presented.

Article 5 would add \$75,000 to the School Dis-

trict's Capital Reserve Fund that currently has \$83,000. Hoppa said the administration has identified a number of big ticket renovations and repairs facing the district, and this would provide a cost-effective way to prepare for them. There was little discussion, and the article was forwarded to the warrant as presented.

Article 3, the Hampstead Association of School Staff labor agreement, was moved to the warrant unchanged, although Matt Murphy took exception to the fact it was for four years, saying no one knew what the state of the economy would be at that time.

The articles will be voted on March 13, Election Day.

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Folsom Sugar House Looks Forward to Good Season



Every six minutes, Brian Folsom loads more wood into the fire to keep a consistent heat for boiling the sap to make maple syrup. *Photo by Chris Paul*

MATT RITTENHOUSE
Tri-Town Times

CHESTER - Though it's been a relatively mild winter with little snow, Folsom's Sugar House is going about its maple sugaring business like normal, as they've been doing for more than 20 years.

Brian and Sue Folsom run the operation, and by Monday, Feb. 6, they had their first taps out, about a week earlier than last year. By the next day they were boiling down the first batch to "sweeten the pan" in preparation for when enough sap is collected to begin in earnest the process of boiling, filtering, grading and bottling.

On the following Friday, as the sun quickly warmed the area following a solidly cold night, Brian Folsom was planning to go out and start collecting buckets around noontime.

He expected to have about 500 taps out by the end of the weekend.

After collecting the sap, he boils it down in the sugar house's 3- by 8-foot, wood-fired evaporator. It boils about 60 to 70 gallons of sap an hour to make 1 to 1.5 gallons of syrup. The Folsoms can boil for 10 hours after each sap run, when 600 to 800 gallons is collected during a good day.

While there is some concern noted by sugarers about the lack of a good New England winter this year, a stoic Folsom has been in the business long enough not to worry too much about it.

"There's no reason to be nervous," said Brian. "That's (the weather) nothing in our control."

There are so many variables when it comes to maple syrup production, he said, that you take what you get and make the best of it.

Chester's sugar house has had good seasons when the ground's been bare, so that variable isn't enough to cause concern.

That being said, the local sugar house has had a good start to the year and he does not have to trudge or snowshoe through knee-deep snow drifts to get to their hundreds of taps around town.

Some producers note that the lack of snow cover can shorten the season, but if the area gets some cold air coming through, as it did last weekend, the trees can do fine. Folsom said snow can aid the process by keeping temperatures low at night, and it can warm up more quickly without it. However, maplers are looking for cold nights followed by warm days, so the cold air coming through can nullify the lack of snow.

Taps run best when night

temperatures drop below freezing and daytime wind chill temperatures rise to 35 degrees or more, according to the state's Maple Syrup Producers Association.

Brian Folsom said he is hoping the season will run until the end of March, for about eight weeks. A lot can happen in that time, and though it's a busy time, he's looking forward to getting out again and bringing home-grown and boiled syrup - and a variety of other products like maple candy, maple taffy, maple cream, maple cream cones and maple sugar - to his customers.

The Folsoms started bottling their first batches last weekend and plan to be open for the season this weekend. Check www.folsomsugarhouse.com or call 887-3672 for information on times. They're located at 130 Candia Road in Chester.

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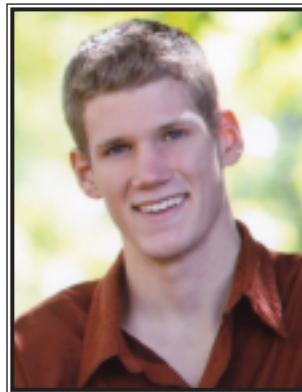
Memorial Benefit for Branden Myers

MATT RITTENHOUSE
Tri-Town Times

Friends and family of Branden Myers are holding a memorial benefit in his honor on Sunday, Feb. 19, at Whippersnapper's, 44 Nashua Road, Londonderry.

Myers lost his life in a car accident late in 2011. Since then there has been an outpouring of support for his family, and the memorial benefit is the latest evidence of the impact the young man, 19 when he died, had on his community.

Myers was raised in



Brandon Myers

Chester and graduated from Pinkerton Academy.

While he was an accomplished horseman, athlete

and scholar, his parents, Glenn and Darlene Myers, say that their son's big heart and acts of kindness will always be what is remembered most. Many have stories of the way the young man went out of his way to bring a smile to their faces.

On Feb. 19, all ages are encouraged to come out to Whippersnapper's Restaurant to "Rally for the Myers." Admission is \$10 per ticket, and performing live will be The Voice and both Tom Dixon and David Wilson of The Tom Dixon Band. The event runs from

2 until 6 p.m. There will also be raffles, including a 50/50.

For more information contact: BrandenMyersBenefit@yahoo.com.

A memorial fund has also been set up in Branden's name. For more information, visit: www.brandenmyersmemorialfund.org. Money collected will go toward helping his family through this difficult time and to help animals, something Branden would have wanted, his friends and family say.



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FRIDAY NIGHT FUN

Last Friday night at Chester Academy, the evening was devoted to having fun and giving parents a night off. The event is a fifth-grade fundraiser to help with the cost for their field trips. Children in grades 1-4 were welcomed for crafts, games, gym time, and snacks while being supervised by the fifth graders, staff and students. Above left, first-grade student Teagan Stinson builds a Valentine Card with the help of Katie Allan. In center, Hannah Lavoie burns off some energy with a Hula Hoop. At right, fifth-grader Marci Freiburger, left, helps Eric Holske and Annabel Veale construct a globe out of Hula Hoops.

Photos by Chris Paul

Dog Registration Tags at Town Hall

MATT RITTENHOUSE
Tri-Town Times

CHESTER – Dog tags are in at the Chester Town Clerk/Tax Collector's office. By state law, all owners of dogs over 4 months old are required annually to register their canines and keep the tag on a collar around the

dog's neck.

Dogs must be licensed by April 30 to avoid late fines or civil forfeiture. Late fees are \$1 each month of unpaid fees. A \$25 forfeiture to the town is required, should the fee not be paid within 15 days of being told of failure to register.

Owners of dogs may register them in person at the

Town Clerk/Tax Collector's office, electronically or by mail. For an application or e-registration guidelines, visit www.chesternh.org.

Cost is \$9 for unaltered males or females, \$6.50 for spayed and neutered dogs. For persons age 65 and older, the first dog is \$2, but the regular fee follows for additional dogs.

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Hampstead Human Services Gets Helping Hand from Local Business

PENNY WILLIAMS
Tri-Town Times

HAMPSTEAD - A local business held a fund-raising effort to help out Hampstead Human Services and town residents in need.

"Times are tough right now for so many people, and we wanted to do something to help," said Laura White of Precision Haircutters. "Through some research we learned that Hampstead Human Services has a program we could donate to that would help local families in need."

The business held a "Gold and Locks" event on Saturday, Jan. 28, and raised

\$905, which it donated to the Town's Human Services Department.

"It's just a drop in the bucket but every little bit helps," said White. "I want to thank all the businesses that donated to help make this event a success: Zorvino Vineyards, Lobster Q, DeSilva Motor Sports, The Village Restaurant, Suzanne's Florist, The Pasta Loft, Colby Tanning, Atkinson House of Pizza, Northstar Music Center, Treasures Hallmark, J & B Butcher, Prime Pizza, Sweet Circles, Cherry Village Pizza and Cosmos Pizza."

Danielle Forsyth, Hampstead Human Services coordinator, said she sees lots of

individuals and families who need help but who don't qualify for one reason or another for financial assistance from the Town. However, their need is genuine, and Forsythe tries to help when she can. She said the donation will be used for gas cards, food cards, and credit cards that can be used for medicine, and she hopes to keep a little cash so that when there is a need, her department will be able to help.

"I am grateful to the businesses and people for thinking of helping me to help those in Hampstead who need help in these very difficult times," she said.



Pictured from left are Precision Haircutters personnel Laura White, Susan Parker, Trish Callahan, and Julie Pelletier; Danielle Forsythe, Hampstead Human Services coordinator, receiving the \$905 check; and Carolle McGurn. Not pictured are Laura Roy and Kathy Gerry. Precision Haircutters held a "Gold and Locks" event to raise the money to help Hampstead residents in need.

Courtesy photo

Registration Open for Hampstead School District

The Hampstead School District is accepting applications for Fall 2012 enrollment in the Hampstead Inclusionary Preschool (T.E.E.C.H.), which serves 3- and 4-year-olds at Central School.

TEECH, which stands for Transdisciplinary Early Education Classroom in

Hampstead, is based on an "inclusionary education" model, which addresses the individual needs and learning styles of all children.

TEECH offers morning and afternoon classes, and has openings in all classes. Parents pay a fee for the program and must provide transportation. It is not nec-

essary for the tuition-paying children to be residents of Hampstead. Children must be toilet trained by the time school starts in September.

The following classes are offered:

- Two Day Morning Program for children who are 3 by Sept. 30, 2012. Classes are 9:05 to 11:40 a.m. Tues-

days and Thursdays. Cost is \$1,650 for the 2012-13 school year

- Three Day Morning Program for children who will be 3 or 4 by Sept. 30, 2012. Classes are Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 9:05 to 11:40 a.m. Total cost is \$1,900.

- Five Day Morning Pro-

gram for children who will be 3 or 4 by Sept. 30, 2012. Classes are weekdays from 9:05 to 11:40 a.m., and cost is \$2,300.

- Four Day Afternoon Program for children who will be 4 by Sept. 30, 2012 and who will be eligible to enter kindergarten in the fall of 2013. Classes are

Tuesdays through Fridays from 12:20 to 2:50 p.m. Cost is \$2,100.

For more information, or to observe a class, call Fran Baumhor at Hampstead Central School, 329-6326, ext. 6. To register a child, contact the main office at 329-6326, ext. 3.

Electricity

continued from page 1

the town is currently paying. Though a small difference, when calculated out over the year and the hundreds of thousands of kW hours the town uses, the savings is estimated to be \$3,000.

Though selectmen were

on board with the plan upon hearing about it, a subsequent contract raised some concerns. After raising those with Dziemian Monday, they were back on board with the plan and unanimously agreed to enter into the agreement.

In other business:

- The board met with Susan Rand King, president of Granite State Communi-

cations, to hear proposals on entering into a new telephone and internet contract. The board looked at keeping its current system for two more years or entering a five-year agreement for telephone and internet service, and upgrading the phone system to utilize a hosted voice over IP system. The town currently uses Comcast for internet.

Though the five-year plan offers a better service, the estimated monthly cost will be less than what the town is currently paying. Selectmen were in favor of that plan but had concerns about what was needed to upgrade wiring in town buildings to accommodate the system and what that cost would be. Granite State technicians are set to investigate town infrastructure this week to determine what has to be upgraded.

The board also discussed getting quotes for service from other providers.

- Selectmen signed

paperwork that will allow the public library's sole health insurance customer, the library director, to continue under the town's plan. The library trustees previously took over payroll duties for library employees from the town and in so doing had to file with the Internal Revenue Service for an Employer Identification Number (EIN). Though the library director has always been under the town's health insurance plan, obtaining a separate EIN forced some formal paperwork to be completed to allow that to continue.

There was some confu-

sion about the issue, which prompted questions from the board about how and why the library trustees wanted to control payroll and other issues under their purview, but the trustees said they were operating according to state laws and just as the selectmen seek to monitor their employees and matters under their jurisdiction, so do the library's trustees.

The library trustees could seek their own health insurance plan for their employees but will continue with the town's plan because of a desire to save taxpayer dollars.



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Fallen Firefighter Honored at Sandown Ceremony

MATT RITTENHOUSE
Tri-Town Times

SANDOWN - In honor of fallen firefighter Harold Frey, the Sandown fire depart-

ment was visited last week by members of the Granite State Fire Service Support Team for a special ceremony. Mark Klose and Earl Lincoln of the group visited

on Tuesday, Feb. 7, to present the department with a flag flown last October over the New Hampshire Firefighters' Memorial in memory of Frey.

Frey died from cardiac arrest after a routine ice training in January 2011. He is remembered for his service to his country and community. Fellow fire department members in both Sandown and Epping, where he had previously served, described him as an easygoing, good and generous man, someone who loved the fire and emergency medical services.

Last October, Frey's was one of six names added to the New Hampshire Firefighters' Memorial at the state Fire Academy. Gov. John Lynch, along with fire safety officials from across the state, attended the annual ceremony. Frey was the only firefighter added to the stone who died during that year.

Last week's presentation was somber, said fire chief Bill Tapley, but a good experience.

The flag is encased in a

triangular wooden frame. It will be placed on a prominent shelf in the fire station.

The case reads: "Presented to Sandown, NH Fire Department in Memory of Firefighter Harold F. Frey Who Died in the Line of Duty January 16, 2011. This USA flag was flown over the New Hampshire Fallen Firefighters Memorial October 9, 2011 where Firefighter Frey's name was added to the Memorial During the Annual Fallen Firefighters Memorial Service."

The Granite State Fire Service Support Team is a group of volunteers who go out of their way to provide immediate service and support to any emergency response agency that has experienced a line of duty critical injury or death to a firefighter, police officer or emergency medical services (EMS) personnel.

Tapley said the group

has been a great help, not only in the days after Frey's death but also since, especially with navigating all of the policies and paperwork that surround such an event. "I'd still be scratching my head without them," said Tapley.

Both Tapley and Lt. Jon Goldman have joined the group since being recipients of its support. They joined so that they could pass on the help they've received to whoever may need it in the future, echoing the oft repeated phrase that the fire service is a brotherhood, a place where each member looks out for the other.

A contingent of Sandown firefighters is being organized to travel to the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, Md., in October to be present when Frey's name is added to the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial.



Fire Chief Bill Tapley stands between Mark Klose and Earl Lincoln of the Granite State Fire Service Support Team and accepts a flag flown last October over the New Hampshire Firefighters' Memorial in memory of late Sandown firefighter Harold Frey.

Hampstead Special Education Parent Meetings Announced

PENNY WILLIAMS
Tri-Town Times

HAMPSTEAD - After getting off to a successful start in November when the initial meeting of the Hampstead Special Education Parent Group was held, the newly formed parent group has scheduled three meetings for the coming months, starting on Feb. 21.

The Tuesday, Feb. 21, meeting at 6:30 p.m. at the Hampstead Middle School library features a workshop with representatives from Region 10, explaining what they do and how Region 10 can help.

Organizer Michelle Grimm said Region 10 is one of 10 New Hampshire area

agencies contracted with the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services, Bureau of Developmental Services. It is a private, non-profit agency that provides services and support to individuals with developmental disabilities or acquired brain disorders.

"I am encouraging everyone interested to come and learn what Region 10 can do and what exact services they offer to us," Grimm said.

That meeting will be followed by one on Tuesday, April 17, at 6:30 p.m. at the Hampstead Middle School library, focusing on an "Overview of the New Hampshire Special Education Process - The Basics."

This will include discussion of each step of the process as well as a description of the role that parents play.

The final meeting is set for Tuesday, May 29, at 6:30 p.m. at the Hampstead Middle School library and is titled "Special Education 'Appy' Hour." Lori Collins, Hampstead School District technology director, will present information about technology, its use and its role in special education.

Recycling Seeks to Cut Amount of Trash for Pickup in Hampstead

PENNY WILLIAMS
Tri-Town Times

HAMPSTEAD - The Recycling and Solid Waste Committee is recommending a reduction in the number of barrels and bags that can be placed for trash pickup.

At present, residents can put out four 35-gallon barrels or eight bags of trash for

pick-up. The majority of the committee said that most residents do not put out that much on a weekly basis, although a few homes routinely do.

In its effort to motivate residents to recycle more and reduce the trash stream, the committee is recommending to the Board of Selectmen that the number allowed be

reduced to two 35-gallon barrels or four bags of trash. Liaison to the Board of Selectmen Priscilla Lindquist will bring that recommendation to her board (see story page 6).

The committee would like to see the selectmen approve the cut after asking for community input, and hope to have it become effective July 1.

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TRI-TOWN HAPPENINGS

CHESTER

Read for Monarchs Tickets

Children who are 12 years old and under can earn a free ticket to a Manchester Monarchs Sunday home game by reading five books and getting a voucher for a home game ticket. To start, get an official reading log from the Chester Public Library at 3 Chester St. Stop by the library for game dates and more information, or call 887-3404.

Storytimes

Storytimes at Chester Public Library are Tuesdays at 11:15 a.m. They are geared for children ages 3 to 5, and Mr. Tim will read stories and teach crafts. The Library is at 3 Chester St., next to the Post Office. For more information, call 887-3404.

Child Find

The Chester School District will hold Child Find clinics at Chester Academy on March 15, 2012, from 12:30 to 3 p.m. The purpose of Child Find is to screen the developmental skills of children between the ages of 3 to 6 (those not enrolled in first grade) who may be in need of special education services. The screenings are completed by school personnel and address motor skills, speech and language, vision, hearing, and pre-academics. If you think your child may have difficulties or a delay in any of these areas, call 887-3621, ext. 146 to set up an appointment. Appointments are required. This service is free and is open to all Chester residents. All results are confidential.

Co-ed Volleyball

Chester Recreation is offering free adult co-ed pickup volleyball on Wednesdays at 8 p.m. at the Chester Multi-purpose room. Call the Recreation Department for more information at 887-5773 or e-mail: sharon@chesternhrec.org

Softball

Chester Softball is looking for softball players ages 7 through 14. Sign up at www.chesternhbaseball.com. Optional practices have already started on Sundays. Email: jfswindows@comcast.net for times.

Corned Beef Dinner

The Chester Congregational & Baptist Church offers a Corned Beef Dinner on Saturday, March 17, from 5 to 7 p.m. at the Chester Multi-Purpose Room, 84 Chester St. Irish music will be provided by the Third Sunday Fiddlers, and The Chester Dancers, under the direction of Margaret Voss, will also perform. Cost is \$12 for adults, \$5 for children under 12. Proceeds benefit the church. For more information, call the church office at 887-4799 or email: chesterchurchoffice@gsinet.net.

Baseball, Softball

Chester Baseball and Softball Registration is open for all divisions for the 2012 season. Information about tryouts for AAA, Minors and Majors will be posted at: <http://www.chesternhbaseball.com> and click on the clipboard to register.

HAMPSTEAD

Boxtop Drive

Hampstead Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA) invites the community to join its BoxTops for Education Drive, which provides money to enrich the programs offered to Hampstead Central School and Hampstead Middle School students. Help by clipping boxtops from products and drop them off at collection sites around the community - Hampstead Public Library, Hampstead Central School, and Hampstead Memorial Gym.

Special Ed Parents

The Hampstead Special Education Parent Group meets Tuesday, Feb. 21, at 6:30 p.m. at the Hampstead Middle School library. Nancy Murphy and Kristen Frost will present "Getting to Know Region 10." RSVP to info@hampsteadsepg.org if you plan to attend. For more information, visit: www.hampsteadsepg.org or email: info@hampsteadsepg.org.

Book Discussions

On Feb. 16 at 1 p.m., the Hampstead Public Library's Third Thursday Book

Group will discuss "The Piano Teacher" by Janice Y. K. Lee. On Monday, Feb. 20, at 7 p.m., Nonfiction Book Group will discuss "Sea of Glory: America's voyage of discovery: the U.S. Exploring Expedition, 1838-1842" by Nathaniel Philbrick. Copies of both books are available at the library's front desk. Newcomers are always welcome.

Babysitter Training

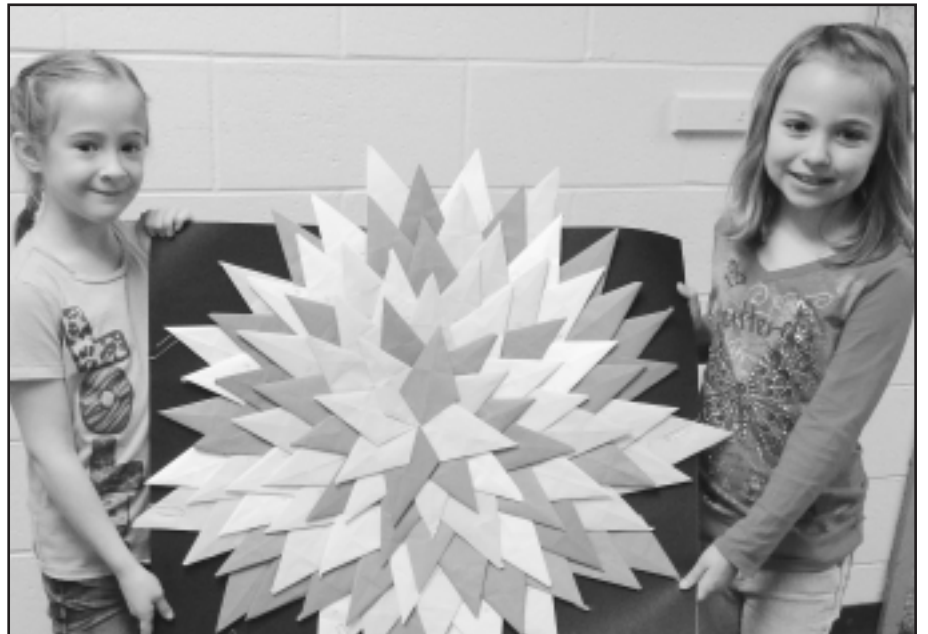
Students age 11 to 14 who want to become a trained babysitter are invited to attend a Babysitter Training class hosted by the Hampstead Public Library during school break on Tuesday, Feb. 28, from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Pre-registration is required at 329-6411 or email pfalconer@hampstead.lib.nh.us. The American Red Cross Babysitter Training course combines video, activities, hands-on skills training and discussion, and teaches how to respond to emergencies and illnesses with first aid, make decisions under pressure, communicate with parents, and recognize safety and hygiene issues. The cost of the class is \$40. Closing date for registration is Feb. 17.

Thrift Shop

The Friends of the Hampstead Public Library's Hollyhock Thrift Shop will accept donations of winter items only until the end of February. Shop hours are Tuesdays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and Saturdays from 9 a.m. to noon at the library.

Stories of Knitting

The free "Stories of Knitting" event at the Hampstead Public Library was postponed because of snow until Saturday, Feb. 18, at 12:30 p.m. Kathy Goldner, founder of the audiobook company Knitting Out Loud, will give an hour-long talk on knitting, past and present. She will bring photographs, knitted items and antiques from her collection. Her themes include: lessons from our grandmothers, the courage of women, and the importance to our culture of domestici-



100TH DAY OF SCHOOL Reaching 100 days of school at Hampstead Central School is a watershed, and the school's students and teachers were busy on Friday, Feb. 10, engaging in myriad activities to celebrate, with all activities centered around the number 100. Second graders Ella DeCesare and Grace McGrath display a huge, colorful 100 point origami starburst made by students in Marla Merchant's second grade class to celebrate the 100th day of school.

Photo by Penny Williams

ty. For more information, call 329-6411 or visit: www.hampsteadlibrary.org.

Family Memorabilia

The Hampstead Public Library presents author and archivist Melissa Mannon on Tuesday, Feb. 21, at 6:30 p.m. to share information from her new book, "The Unofficial Family Archivist: A Guide to Creating and Maintaining Family Papers, Photographs and Memorabilia." She will discuss organization, choosing what to keep, creating documentation, digitized format, and preserving pictures. Attendees can bring some of their own materials, and they will be discussed if time allows. The event is free.

Swedish Meatballs

A Swedish Meatball Supper will be held on Saturday, Feb. 18, from 5 to 6:30 p.m. at East Hampstead Union Church, 225 East Main St. (Route 121A), just south of Route 111. The menu includes meatballs, egg noodles, carrots, peas, cranberry sauce, breads, assorted desserts and beverages. Cost is \$6 for adults, \$3 for children under 12, and no charge for preschoolers. The church is chair-lift accessible, and take out meals are available.

Dinner proceeds benefit the Operating Fund of this historic church. For more information, call 378-0683.

Needlework Socials

The "Sewing Socialites" meet on the second and fourth Fridays of every month at the Hampstead Public Library from 1 to 3 p.m., and work on their needlework projects, sharing this pastime with others. Refreshments are available, along with conversation and shared experience. Those who do needlework of any form and at any level of expertise are welcome. No sign-up or registration is necessary. Meeting is Feb. 24.

Soup and Sandwiches

A Soup, Sandwich and Dessert fellowship takes place Sunday, Feb. 19, at noon at Island Pond Baptist Church, 26 North Salem Road. The event is free. Visit: islandpondbc.org or call 329-5959 for more information.

Ray Flaherty Athletic Scholarship

The Hampstead Middle School's Athletic Club is offering the Ray Flaherty Athletic Scholarship to a former athlete of Hampstead Middle School who

participates in athletics during the senior year at Pinkerton Academy and demonstrates leadership, sportsmanship, and citizenship. The \$500 scholarship is named for retired educator and coach Ray Flaherty. Scholarship applications are available at Pinkerton Academy's Guidance Office and on the Hampstead Middle School's website. Completed applications are due by April 10. The award will be presented at the HMS Spring Sports Awards Night in June. For additional information, call HMS Athletic Director Nancy Benson at 329-6743, ext. 204 or Athletic Club President Angie Gorham at 329-7423.

'Living the Eucharist'

"Living the Eucharist" is coming to St. Anne's Parish beginning the week of Feb. 20 and continuing until April 1. The group will meet once a week during Lent - various times and days will be offered - to learn about and discuss the meaning of Mass, the Eucharist, and scripture readings, and connect more deeply with the faith community. Sign up at St. Anne's on the weekend of Feb. 11 and 12 or call the parish office at 329-5886 for more information.

Winter Sports Banquet

The Hampstead Hawks Middle School Athletic Club invites all middle school basketball and cheer-leading athletes and their families to the Winter Sports Awards Banquet on Tuesday, Feb. 21. The slideshow presentation begins at 6:15 p.m. All athletes are asked to bring individually wrapped snacks.

Student-Faculty Basketball

The Hampstead Hawks Middle School Athletic Club is sponsoring the Hampstead Hawks Student-Faculty Basketball game on Thursday, Feb. 23, from 6:30 to 7:45 p.m. in the Hampstead Middle School Gym. Admission is \$3 for adults, \$2 for students and seniors, and free for children under age 5. Refreshments will be sold. Hampstead Middle School and Central School will play against the

Middle School Boys and Girls basketball teams.

SANDOWN**Baseball & Softball**

Sandown Baseball & Softball Association will hold registration at the Ed Garvey Recreation Facility, 25 Pheasant Run Drive on Friday, Feb. 17, from 5 to 8 p.m. and Saturday Feb. 18, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Children must be 4 years old by April 30, 2012 in order to participate. All new participants must bring their original (no photocopy) birth certificate to register. For more information, email: Sandownbaseball2011@yahoo.com.

Spring Soccer

On-line registration is under way for the non-profit Timberlane Youth Soccer League's (TYSL) spring season, which runs for six weeks and begins Saturday, May 5, with no games Mem-

orial Day weekend. The season ends on Saturday, June 16. Registration fee is \$40 for U6 - U12 divisions and \$50 for U14-U16. Register by Feb. 15 to receive a sibling discount of \$5. Registration ends March 15. A paper registration night will not take place. For additional information, visit: www.timberlaneyouthsoccer.org or call 382-3344. TYSL is not affiliated with the Timberlane Regional School District and is not sponsored by the Recreation Departments of the four district towns - Sandown, Atkinson, Danville and Plaistow. TYSL is looking for someone to work alongside the referee coordinator this season in preparation to take over the position in the fall. Assistant division coordinators are needed for U6, U8 and U10.

Busy Bears Preschool

Openings remain in the Busy Bears Preschool Lib-

rary Sessions, held Tuesdays at 9:30 a.m. and 1 p.m. at the Sandown Public Library. Classes are taught by Jennifer Dawley, a certified early-childhood instructor who uses stories, music, sign language, poetry, and crafts to teach creative expression, social skills, listening skills, early literacy, and math skills. A different theme is presented each week. Register your child at www.sandownlibrary.us or by calling the library at 887-3428. Classes are free.

Knitting Group

Beginners to advanced knitters are invited to join the weekly knitting group on Mondays at 6:30 p.m. at the Sandown Public Library.

Chess Club

Chess Club will be held Thursday, Feb. 16, at 6:30 p.m. at the Sandown Public Library. All ages and abilities are welcome to attend.

Holiday Closure

The Sandown Public Library will be closed on Monday, Feb. 20, in honor of Presidents Day.

School Vacation Program

Sandown Parks and Recreation offers a two-day February School Vacation activity program for students in Grades 1-6 on Tuesday and Wednesday, Feb. 28 and 29, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Ed Garvey Recreation Facility, 25 Pheasant Run Drive. Registration is on a space available basis at \$55 per child for residents and \$60 for non-residents. Add \$5 per child if registration is not received by Feb. 21 at 4 p.m. The registration fee covers all activities, including a pottery workshop and movie field trip. No one-day program is available. Visit www.sandown.us and navigate to the Parks and Recre-

ation Department for details and registration form. Call Recreation Director Deb Brown at 887-1872 for questions. No walk-in registrations on program days will be accepted.

Magic Workshop

Sandown Parks and Recreation offers a magic workshop with magician Norman Ng on Sunday, March 11, at 12:45 p.m. at the Ed Garvey Recreation Facility. Cost is \$10 for residents and \$13 for non-residents. Ng teaches over a dozen magic tricks using regular household items. Visit www.sandown.us for workshop description, registration form and other details, or call Recreation Director Deb Brown at 887-1872. Pre-registration and payment are required. No walk-in registration on program day will be accepted.

continued on page 15

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Happenings

continued from page 13

Free Dinner

Etz Hayim Synagogue, 1 1/2 Hood Road in Derry, presents a free community dinner of Eggplant Parmesan on Sunday, Feb. 19, from 5 to 6:30 p.m. The meal is presented by Elijah's Table, a joint project of Etz Hayim Synagogue and the Episcopal Church of the Transfiguration.

PTA Fundraiser

Residents are invited to shop locally Monday, Feb. 20, to support Sandown schools. Participating merchants Bruchetti's Pizzeria, Zorvino Vineyards, Salon Sophia, Hampstead Health and Fitness, Wunderdog K-9 Care and Training, St. Julian's Macaroons, and Party Playland (on Wednesday, Feb. 22) will donate a percentage of their sales to the Sandown Parent Teacher Association (PTA). That money will help the PTA provide funding for educational programs, parent education, scholarships, family and school events, and field trips. Contact Samantha Borbone at 489-8563 or Kerri Nichols at 887-4057 with questions.

Spaghetti Supper

The Sandown Police Explorers will hold a spaghetti supper on Sunday, Feb. 19, to support their program. The dinner will be held at the Ed Garvey Recreation Center on Pheasant Run Drive from 1 to 4 p.m. Tickets are \$6, and \$4 for seniors.

REGIONAL

Hope and Blessing

Dr. Mary Pearson, family practice physician and Chief Operating Officer of New Creation Healing Center, 80 Route 125, Kingston, will lead a six-week study on "Hope and Blessing" on Tuesdays starting Feb. 21, from 7 to 8:30 p.m. Each study will build on the previous one, but will be designed to be self contained so people can attend even if they miss one or two weeks. For further informa-

tion, call 642-6700.

Benefit Concert, Auction

Grammy award winner Paula Cole will be at the Stockbridge Theatre at Pinkerton Academy on Friday, May 4, at 7 p.m. All proceeds from the fourth annual Concert and Silent Auc-

tion will benefit the Center for Life Management Foundation, which supports the non-profit community mental health agency that serves the greater Derry/Salem/Plastow region. Tickets are on sale online at www.stockbridgetheatre.com, by phone at 437-5210 or at the Stock-

bridge Theatre box office Mondays through Fridays from 1 to 5 p.m. Tickets are \$30 and \$35 for adults and \$20 for seniors and students. The silent auction opens at 6 p.m.

River Advisory Committee

Residents of Chester,

Sandown, Fremont, Raymond, Danville, Brentwood, East Kingston, Kingston, Exeter, Newfields, or Stratham are invited to serve on the Exeter-Squamscott River Local Advisory Committee (ESR-LAC). This is a volunteer group working on projects related to the Exeter-Squamscott River. The Committee meets once a month in Brentwood and is involved in public education programs and outreach to local land use boards. For more information, contact Theresa Walker of the Rockingham Planning Commission at 778-0885, twalker@rpc-nh.org.

Kids Coop Theatre

Kids Coop Theatre presents the musical "Thoroughly Modern Millie, Jr." on Friday, March 9, at 7 p.m., and Saturday, March 10, at 1 and 7 p.m. at the Adams Memorial Opera House, 29 West Broadway, Derry. Tickets are \$12 for seniors and students and \$15 for adults. The play has three teen directors – Megan Cullinane, Ben Thomas and John Rodgers, all Pinkerton Academy juniors, mentored by David Ducharme, Donna Tongue and Tina Cassidy. Further information and tickets are available at www.kids-coop-theatre.org.



CHALLENGE TO READ Sandown North Elementary School hosted the New Hampshire Fisher Cats recently to introduce the Fisher Cats Reading Challenge, presented by the Community College System of New Hampshire. Fisher Cats mascot Fungo met with the students and presented a challenge: Read an additional five books on top of the normal school curriculum and receive a pair of tickets to a Fisher Cats/CCSNH Reading Challenge Night at Northeast Delta Dental Stadium. Through a Fisher Cats Foundation donation, the school with the highest percentage of students who complete the Reading Challenge will win a \$3,000 grand prize. Two schools with the next highest percentage will each win \$1,000 prizes.

Courtesy photo

Pinkerton Academy Derry, New Hampshire

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